

Town of Bridgewater
Committee to Save the Bridgewater Village School Building
Minutes of November 7, 2017

DRAFT MINUTES

Location: Bridgewater Grange Hall
Date: November 7, 2017
Time: 5:30 PM

Meeting was called to order at approximately 5:35 PM by Brian Bontrager

Present: Brian Bontrager, Collen Doyle, William Young, Vicky Young, Hank Smith, and Joni Kennedy

Visitors: Alice Paglia, George Spear, Andy Bird, Bruce Maxham, Raymond Kennedy Sr. and Nancy Robinson

We reviewed the meeting minutes from our October 17, 2017 meeting. There were four revisions/additions.

- 1.) Insert link for Funding Directory for Historic Preservation Projects In Vermont, Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, June 2017
http://accd.vermont.gov/sites/accdnew/files/documents/HP/FUNDING_DIRECTORY_2017.pdf
- 2.) Correction regarding the Poultney building that Lisa Ryan was referring to. It was the rehab of the Stonebridge Inn. Here is the information and link <https://www.poultneyhistoricalsociety.org/timeline/public-buildings/the-stonebridge>
- 3.) The training that took place in the Bridgewater Village School House Building was through the State of Vermont Division of Fire Safety. They conducted a one day training and did (5) different scenarios of different occupancy types.
- 4.) Discussion about some mold in basement of school – suggestion that Town has a company come out and assess it.

Hank Smith made the motion that we approve/accept the minutes of October 17, 2017 with the revisions listed above. Collen Doyle seconded the motion.

Brian Bontrager – We are reviewing our list of possible re-use and re-purposing ideas and narrowing the list down for the Community Development Block Grant – Planning Grant and Feasibility Study.

Andy Bird asked if our group is looking at saving all of the building. Brian stated that the group is looking at re-purposing the whole building/structure.

Collen Doyle – Presented his thoughts about creating a Cultural Arts/Enrichment Center and Community Center. He spoke about growth and vitality in our town and building upon the assets within our community. He thought Adult/Child daycare, laundromat, and yoga studios would be great. He mentioned what a nice model ArtisTree is in Pomfret. Collen and a friend are exploring transportation and/or a shuttle service from Woodstock to the Bridgewater Mill Mall. Collen stated that keeping the school as a Community Center for the Town would save the Fire Department quite a bit of money.

Alice Paglia – Opportunity to offer educational classes, computer classes, and cooking classes etc.

There was a general discussion about keeping the downstairs room and kitchen as a Multi-Purpose Community Center/Town Meeting Room/Emergency Shelter for the Town. It could be a great rental space for memorial services, weddings, parties, celebrations, dances, dinners, classes, conferences, and/or clinics.

Preserving the Bridgewater Village School House and re-purposing/re-using it could offer enhancing opportunities to our town and community.

The group discussed Village Designation and its benefits to the Town. This is on the Agenda for the Select Board meeting on November 14th, 2017. They will decide if they want to formally move forward with this process.

It was decided at our last meeting on October 17th that a Special Select Board Meeting should be scheduled to have someone come down to present the Community Development Block Grant Program to the Select Board. This is a Planning Grant and if the Town applies for it would do the Feasibility Study on the Bridgewater Village School House Building. Nancy will get some dates from the Select Board at their meeting on November 14th for early December so she can coordinate dates for a meeting with Robert Haynes.

Ideas narrowed down for Re-Purpose and Re-Use

- 1) Meeting House for Town /Multi-Purpose Community Center/ Emergency Shelter for Town
- 2) Cultural Arts/Enrichment Center, after school Activity Center
- 3) Educational Classes, Trade, Tech, Musical, Arts, Yoga

- 4) Adult/Child Daycare
- 5) Laundromat
- 6) Post Office
- 7) Pop up Maker Space

The Committee recognizes committee member Brianne Gallagher's decision to step down from the committee at this time and accepts with regrets.

The Committee decided to meet once a month on the **first Tuesday of every month at the Bridgewater Grange Hall at 5:30 pm.**

Bill Young made the motion to accept and Vicky Young seconded it.

Brian Bontrager adjourned the meeting at 7:05 PM

We invite community members to join us at our monthly meetings as we welcome your thoughts and ideas.

Respectfully submitted,
Joni Kennedy